

VZCZCXRO4832  
RR RUEHAO  
DE RUEHTG #0183 0572336  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 262336Z FEB 10  
FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0012  
INFO WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFISS/CDR JTF-BRAVO  
RHMFISS/COMSOC SOUTH  
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFIUU/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 000183

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [PREL](#) [HO](#)  
SUBJECT: Resistance Movement Demonstration

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The anti-coup "resistance" movement held a peaceful demonstration on February 25 in Tegucigalpa in which about 10,000 protestors participated. The demonstrators tried to march to the Executive Building and, when they found the street leading there blocked by security forces, went to the National Congress. Resistance movement leader Rafael Alegria told PolOff that the purpose of the march was to call for a constituent assembly and for the end of human rights violations and to demonstrate support for civil servants and public education. The resistance plans to hold a demonstration on February 27 in San Pedro Sula. Alegria said the resistance plans to hold such demonstrations on a monthly basis. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) The anti-coup "resistance" movement held its first large demonstration since the January 27 inauguration of President Porfirio Lobo on February 25 in the capital of Tegucigalpa. The resistance movement is scheduled to hold a demonstration on February 27 in San Pedro Sula, the country's economic capital and second largest city. The demonstrators, who numbered about 10,000, marched to the Executive Mansion, but were unable to reach that destination because security forces had closed off the street. The protestors then marched to the National Congress and concluded their demonstration at that location. The march was peaceful. As was the case with anti-coup demonstrations held while the de facto regime was in power, many members of the teachers' unions participated in the demonstration and we believe their participation may have significantly increased the number of protestors. The Embassy received a report that when a police officer attempted to stop a protestor from spray painting a wall, two to three individuals approached the policeman and brandished firearms. The police officer retreated and returned with reinforcements, but the individuals who had produced the weapons ran away and the police were unable to detain or capture them. The U.S. came under criticism by the protestors, who shouted that the U.S. Ambassador was too involved in Honduran affairs and was telling the Lobo government how to run the country.

¶3. (SBU) Resistance leader Rafael Alegria told Poloff on February 25 that the purpose of the demonstration was to call for a constitutional assembly and for the end of human rights violations as well as to demonstrate support for civil servants and public education. Alegria said the resistance movement was awaiting a reaction from the Presidency to the march. Alegria expressed satisfaction with the turnout, but also noted that the resistance lacks funds. He told Poloff that the resistance movement plans to hold one large demonstration monthly and that particular groups, such as unions and teachers, may hold additional demonstrations.

14. (SBU) Comment: This protest demonstrates that the resistance movement is not a spent force. Its members failed to achieve their goal of reinstating President Jose Manuel "Mel" Zelaya to office and are now touting the holding of a constituent assembly as their principal objective and as the solution to the Honduran political crisis. The resistance movement has asked that President Lobo meet with them as a movement, but thus far he has taken the position that he will meet individually with the different groups that belong to the resistance movement, but that he will not meet with the resistance as an entity or movement. The resistance has refused to recognize the November 29, 2009 general election and thus argues that the Lobo government lacks legitimacy.

LLORENS